NUMB. XXX.

The SPECTATOR.

Si, Mimnermus uti cenſet, ſine amore Jociſque
Nil eſt Jucundum; vivas in amore Jociſque. Hor.

Wedneſday, April 4. 1711.

ONE common Calamity makes Men extremely affect each other, tho' they differ in every other Particular. The Paſſion of Love is the moſt general Concern among Men; and I am glad to hear by my laſt Advices from *Oxford*, that there are a Set of Sighers in that Univerſity, who have erected themſelves into a Society in honour of that tender Paſſion. Theſe Gentlemen are of that Sort of Inamoratos, who are not ſo very much loſt to common Senſe, but that they underſtand the Folly they are guilty of; and for that Reaſon ſeparate themſelves from all other Company, becauſe they will enjoy the Pleaſure of talking incoherently, without being ridiculous to any but each other. When a Man comes into the Club, he is not obliged to make any Introduction to his Diſcourſe, but at once, as he is ſeating himſelf in his Chair, ſpeaks in the Thread of his own Thoughts, 'She gave me a very obliging Glance, She never 'look'd ſo well in her Life as this Evening, or the like Reflection, without Regard to any other Members of the Society; for in this Aſſembly they do not meet to talk to each other, but every Man claims the full Liberty of talking to himſelf. Inſtead of Snuff-boxes and Canes, which are uſual Helps to Diſcourſe with other young Fellows, theſe have each ſome Piece of Ribband, a broken Fan, or an old Girdle, which they play with while they talk of the fair Perſon remember'd by each reſpective Token. According to the Repreſentation of the Matter from my Letters, the Company appear like ſo many Players rehearſing behind the Scenes; one is ſighing and lamenting his Deſtiny in beſeeching Terms, another declaring he will break his Chain, and another in dumb-Show, ſtriving to expreſs his Paſſion by his Geſture. It is very ordinary in the Aſſembly for one of a ſudden to riſe and make a Diſcourſe concerning his Paſſion in general, and deſcribe the Temper of his Mind in ſuch a Manner, as that the whole Company ſhall join in the Deſcription, and feel the Force of it. In this Caſe, if any Man has declared the Violence of his Flame in more pathetick Terms, he is made Preſident for that Night, out of reſpect to his ſuperiour Paſſion.

We had ſome Years ago in this Town a Set of People who met and dreſſed like Lovers, and were diſtinguiſhed by the Name of the *Fringe-Glove Club*; but they were Perſons of ſuch moderate Intellects even before they were impaired by their Paſſion, that their Irregularities could not furniſh ſufficient Variety of Folly to afford daily new Impertinencies; by which Means that Inſtitution dropp'd. Theſe Fellows could expreſs their Paſſion in nothing but their Dreſs; but the *Oxonians* are phantaſtical now they are Lovers, in proportion to their Learning and Underſtanding before they became ſuch. The Thoughts of the ancient Poets on this agreeable Phrenzy, are tranſlated in honour of ſome modern Beauty; and *Chloris* is won to Day, by the ſame Compliment that was made to *Lesbia* a thouſand Years ago. But as far as I can learn, the Patron of the Club is the renowned Don *Quixote*. The Adventures of that gentle Knight are frequently mention'd in the Society, under the Colour of laughing at the Paſſion and themſelves: But at the ſame Time, tho' they are ſenſible of the Extravagancies of that unhappy Warriour, they do not obſerve, that to turn all the Reading of the beſt and wiſeſt Writings into Rapſodies of Love, is a Phrenzy no leſs diverting than that of the aforeſaid accompliſh'd *Spaniard*. A Gentleman who, I hope, will continue his Correſpondence, is lately admitted into the Fraternity, and ſent me the following Letter.

SIR,

'SINCE I find you take Notice of Clubs, I beg 'Leave to give you an Account of one in '*Oxford*, which you have no where mention'd, and 'perhaps never heard of. We diſtinguiſh our ſelves 'by the Title of the *Amorous Club*; are all Votaries of *Cupid*, and Admirers of the Fair-Sex. 'The Reaſon that we are ſo little known in the 'World, is the Secreſy which we are obliged to 'live under in the Univerſity. Our Conſtitution 'runs counter to that of the Place wherein we live: 'For in Love there are no Doctors, and we all profeſs ſo high Paſſion, that we admit of no Graduates in it. Our Preſidentſhip is beſtow'd accord-

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ing to the Dignity of Paſſion; our Number is unlimited; and our Statutes are like thoſe of the Druids, recorded in our own Breaſts only, and explained by the Majority of the Company. A Miſtreſs, and a Poem in her Praiſe, will introduce any Candidate: Without the latter no one can be admitted; for he that is not in love enough to rhime, is unqualified for our Society. To ſpeak diſreſpectfully of any Woman, is Expulſion from our gentle Society. As we are at preſent all of us Gown-men, inſtead of duelling when we are Rivals, we drink together the Health of our Miſtreſs. The Manner of doing this ſometimes indeed creates Debates; on ſuch Occaſions we have Recourſe to the Rules of Love among the Antients.

Naevia ſex Cyathis, ſeptem Juſtina bibatur.

This Method of a Glaſs to every Letter of her Name, occaſioned the other Night a Diſpute of ſome Warmth. A young Student, who is in Love with Mrs. *Elizabeth Dimple*, was ſo unreaſonable as to begin her Health under the Name of *Elizabetha*; which ſo exaſperated the Club, that by common Conſent we retrenched it to *Betty*. We look upon a Man as no Company, that does not ſigh five times in a Quarter of an Hour; and look upon a Member as very abſurd, that is ſo much himſelf as to make a direct Anſwer to a Queſtion. In fine, the whole Aſſembly is made up of abſent Men, that is, of ſuch Perſons as have loſt their Locality, and whoſe Minds and Bodies never keep Company with one another. As I am an unfortunate Member of this diſtracted Society, you cannot expect a very regular Account of it; for which Reaſon, I hope you will pardon me that I ſo abruptly ſubſcribe my ſelf,

Sir,

Your moſt obedient

humble Servant,

T. B.

I forgot to tell you, that *Albina*, who has ſix Votaries in this Club, is one of your Readers.

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